

funerous may and can be consumed, there is no reason for suffering this great nuisance to exist.

Thoroughness.—The Prevention of the Use of unhealthy underground Cellars as Living-rooms.—This is a provision which should be transferred from the "Metropolitan Buildings Act," and applied to the whole kingdom, under the auspices of the Sanitary Commissioners, more especially so, as it has no relation whatever to the legitimate objects of the "Buildings Act." To quote an often-repeated proverb, "A place for every thing, and every thing in its place."

Passing to the fifteenth head,—

Ventilation.—In order to carry out this object in all its integrity, I contend that the ventilation of every dwelling-house, workshop, manufactory, printing-office, public building, or meeting-room, whether church, chapel, concert room, theatre, or otherwise; in fact, of every covered building where persons are in the habit of congregating, or meeting, or living, should be rendered strictly obligatory upon the respective owners. Perhaps the surest way of including all would be to give the exceptions, which should only consist of warehouses, which are not much frequented. This would no doubt cause great opposition, but I hold that to be no argument at all, and dismiss it as such. The requiring every landlord to thoroughly ventilate his dwelling-house, workshop, &c., is simply nothing more than carrying out a provision to prevent his poisoning either himself or others, just as the law would render illegal the administering of a dose of arsenic by one man either to himself or another, the only difference being in the time which each process takes to effect its deadly object,—a dose of arsenic being rapid in its effects, while a non-ventilated house is the "slow and sore" (poison) which it is said "wins the race."

"Every Englishman's house is his castle" many will exclaim. True,—but he is not on that account to be allowed to commit suicide, homicide, or any other crime, with impunity, more especially when such disastrous consequences as are entailed on unventilated rooms can be prevented at so trifling an expense.

The ventilation of dwelling-houses is of primary importance, being even more so than of theatres, or large public rooms, or restaurants in our dwelling-houses for longer periods together than elsewhere: for instance, a man goes to bed, and remains in his bed-room for perhaps eight or ten hours; he goes to church and remains only two hours, and to a concert or theatre, and remains for three, four, or five hours, so that the ventilation of his sleeping-room is clearly of the chief importance. I propose, therefore, to say a few words on this subject. The mode in which I would ventilate ordinary town dwelling-houses with well-hole staircases from top to bottom, would be as follows:—In the basement at the bottom of the well-hole I would have one of Nott's patent stoves (or perhaps Candy's patent ventilating stove might answer the purpose), and a communication should be formed between the external air and the basement by a shaft or by a grating in the wall, if the situation should not be very damp. I would also have communications between the staircase and each room of the house by means of a small opening or shaft from each ceiling of the staircase to the floor of the room above in an oblique direction, which opening should be guarded at the upper end by a piece of fine felt, so as to prevent any sudden draughts, and I would also have an air-flue formed in the party-wall from the basement to the top of the house adjoining, and following the course of the kitchen flue, and terminating at the top with a windguard. This flue should have branch flues from the upper part of each of the rooms in the house where that can be managed, the openings of which in the different rooms should be provided with an Arnott's valve. If such an arrangement of flues as I have described could not be obtained, or if the house should be already built, the Arnott's valves might be inserted in the flues from the fire-places (of course near the ceiling), or if any of the rooms should not have fire-places, an opening guarded by a valve should be made in one of the walls, to communicate with the external air, or a Baillie's or Fair's patent transparent ventilator in one of the upper squares of the window,

The way in which the ventilation of the basement should be lighted, it would rarely the air around it, which would ascend, and the cold external air would rush in by the shaft or opening to supply its place, and in turn be rarefied and ascend. The rarefied air, in its ascent up the well-hole and staircase, would pass through the openings in the ceilings and through the floors above into each of the rooms, and up the rooms and through the openings into the flues, or into the external air, as the case may be. The presence of any persons, or the combustion of firing, candles, or gas, &c., in any of the rooms, would of course facilitate the current of rarefied air into the rooms; and by this arrangement every room in the house might be brought to about the same temperature, and as the temperature of the staircase and of the rooms would assimilate pretty closely, there would not be those unpleasant draughts which are usually felt every time the door is opened, and as each room would be well supplied with fresh air (which might be admitted through the carpet, or rug, or the skirting, as found best), the chimney would not be likely to smoke; indeed, as the combustion would be much more perfect, there would be very little smoke produced, and in going from a sitting-room to a bed-room, we should not find such an unpleasant difference in the temperature as is usually the case. Where gas is burned, additional ventilation should always be provided.

Sixteenth.—Establishment of Public Gardens and Play-grounds, &c.—There is an old proverb which will apply very well to the case in point—"All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy." Should our legislators, then, refuse or neglect to furnish Mr. Jack Bull with the above-mentioned necessary means for his wholesome and healthy "recreation," they will assuredly lie under the imputation of conniving at, or wishing to perpetuate Jack's no-doubted and inevitable dullness. But I would go further than the establishment of public play-grounds, &c., and, taking a lesson from the ancient Greeks, institute public games, with prizes for the fastest runner, the best leaper, wrestler, &c., by which means good might be effected.

A LONDONER.

ARE ARCHITECTS AND SURVEYORS TO BE EXCLUDED FROM THE SEWERS' COMMISSIONS?

SIR,—We look for your opinion as to the "ground of exception" to architects and surveyors as commissioners of sewers, in the report of the Sanitary Commission.

It is not quite clear from the report, that Lord Grosvenor and those who have subscribed it concur in the "exception," but merely state that they have had presented to them "ground of exception." It seems very important to ascertain whether there is any real ground of exception against a class whose professional pursuits would appear to qualify them, more than others, to superintend the operations of sewage—whether, in short, it is their science or their integrity which is at so low an ebb.

It is clear that the Westminster Commission incurred much obloquy from its adhering to an expensive and inflexible system of sewage, after science and experience had shown that it was erroneous. But it may be asked, whether this was attributable to the prejudices and opinions of architects and surveyors only? I think you will find, upon referring to your reports, that men of nearly every profession attended the deliberations of that court: and that the commissioners who were members of the architectural profession were by no means united in opinion; but that there were several who, at much cost of time and thought, perseveringly promoted a new system of sewage, which was ultimately carried into practice.

I can understand that a recommendation, that the Commission of Sewers should not have in it a predominance of architects, or, indeed, of any one class of men, would be just and prudent; but I am not reconciled to the sentence which would exclude from a commission, upon whose deliberations the convenient occupation of houses and buildings in

a great measure depends, the very persons who have the best knowledge, and whose co-operation, in such a case, might have the most advantageous of giving and receiving information to an important subject.

It is to be hoped, that the Sanitary Commission do not concur in such a stigma upon a whole class of men, and that architects and surveyors of character, being entrusted with very important functions in other respects, will not be necessarily excluded from a commission of sewers, in which their acquirements enable them to be of peculiar benefit to the public.—I am, Sir, &c.

Dec. 17.

A SUBSCRIBER.

THE DUOMO OF FLORENCE.

SIR,—I cannot but recognize the courtesy with which "An Inquirer" offers his comments upon my paper respecting the cathedral at Florence, and most certainly take blame to myself if my language should have been so unguarded as to have led any of my hearers, and himself among the rest, to entertain confused notions of the opinions I intended to convey. I feel with him, that doric language is not well adapted to serious subjects; but I am sure he will agree with me that there is no reason that a bald and cold narrative should be best fitting for describing a work of the imagination. I can assure "An Inquirer" that I sought not any of the graces of language, for I was so pressed for time that I had not the opportunity of perusing even a great part of my paper before I delivered it at the Institute.

We will now consider the objection which he states to my matter. He dislikes my phrase of "lights in an age of artistic darkness," as applied to Arnolfo and Giotto. In speaking of Italians and an Italian building, I meant my terms to apply only to that country, and particularly with reference to architecture and to its artistic treatment. From the fifth to the eleventh century we find the edifices erected there without any fine principle of art, and even those which claim our admiration are due, generally, rather to foreign artists, particularly those from Byzantium, than to native talent. From the eleventh to the middle of the fourteenth century we have the Duomo, baptistry, and falling tower of Pisa; the baptistry, cathedral, and belfry of Florence; and the loggia of Orgagna, in that city, as the most striking edifices of that period. The powers of the Italian mind had become enfeebled, and scarcely a powerful intellect ever brought to bear upon the monuments of that land during the middle ages: they were to a great degree distinct, fortuitous, unconnected productions, and many of them due to foreign talent, as the Byzantine churches in Catalonia and the south, and the Lombard edifices in the north.

But how remarkable was the phenomenon observable on this side of the Alps, while the classic land of the arts had remained stationary since the irruption of the Goths. The Byzantine style had been modified and harmonized into a grand, and uniform, and perfect system, known by us under the term of Norman, which prevailed from the middle of the tenth to the end of the twelfth century, and was thus adopted from our conquerors. To this succeeded the pointed or lancet, owing probably its origin to the Saracenic taste of the crusaders, by them introduced into Europe, and lasting till 1300. Then came the decorated style, which prevailed about seventy years, expanded into the flamboyant of France, Germany, the Netherlands, and Spain, and developed into the perpendicular of our own country; and which flourished at the very period when Orgagna, despising the trammels of authority, designed the loggia of Florence. All this had been going on while Italy was, as it were, slumbering, satisfied with incongruously piling up together the materials of former times, which they had at hand. No longer taste, but the wants of the moment, directed the artist, or rather the artisan. Is then the phrase of "an age of artistic darkness" inapplicable to this period in Italy, and the more particularly when considered in reference to architect-